

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 100

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 218th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 22, 2018

Sponsored by:

Senator JOSEPH F. VITALE

District 19 (Middlesex)

Senator VIN GOPAL

District 11 (Monmouth)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senator O'Scanlon

SYNOPSIS

Urges Governor to develop strategies reducing children's exposure to adverse childhood experiences.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/26/2018)

1 **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION** urging the Governor to develop
2 strategies to reduce children’s exposure to adverse childhood
3 experiences.
4
5 **WHEREAS**, Research over the last two decades in the evolving fields
6 of neuroscience, molecular biology, public health, genomics, and
7 epigenetics reveals that adverse childhood experiences in the first
8 few years of a child’s life build changes into the biology of the
9 human body that influence physical and mental health throughout a
10 child’s life; and
11 **WHEREAS**, Adverse childhood experiences are traumatic experiences
12 that occur during childhood; and
13 **WHEREAS**, These adverse experiences include physical, emotional, or
14 sexual abuse, physical and emotional neglect, household
15 dysfunction, substance use disorder, untreated mental illness or
16 incarceration of a household member, or domestic violence,
17 separation, or divorce involving a family member; and
18 **WHEREAS**, Strong, frequent, or prolonged stress caused by adverse
19 childhood experiences can become toxic stress, impacting the
20 development of a child’s fundamental brain architecture and stress
21 response systems; and
22 **WHEREAS**, Changes to a child’s fundamental brain architecture and
23 stress response systems cause health problems in adulthood that are
24 the lead to the most common causes of death and disability in the
25 United States; and
26 **WHEREAS**, Neurobiological, epigenetics, and psychological studies
27 have shown that traumatic experiences in childhood and
28 adolescence can diminish concentration, memory, organizational,
29 and language abilities, thereby negatively impacting a student’s
30 academic performance, classroom behavior, and ability to form
31 relationships; and
32 **WHEREAS**, The Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACE Study)
33 is a research study conducted by Kaiser Permanente and the United
34 States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and
35 **WHEREAS**, The ACE Study, which surveyed approximately 17,000
36 participants, demonstrated an association of adverse childhood
37 experiences with health and social problems as adults; and
38 **WHEREAS**, According to the study, two-thirds of the participants had
39 at least one adverse childhood experience, and one in six of the
40 participants had four or more adverse experiences; and
41 **WHEREAS**, The ACE Study found that a person with four or more
42 adverse childhood experiences was two times more likely to have a
43 stroke, ischemic heart disease, or chronic pulmonary obstructive
44 disease, and are at a high risk of developing cancer and diabetes;
45 and
46 **WHEREAS**, According to the study’s findings, adverse childhood
47 experiences can affect a child’s future contact with the criminal
48 justice system. Women and men who have undergone adverse
49 childhood experiences are at a higher risk of becoming victims or

1 perpetrators of intimate partner violence than those who have not
2 suffered such adverse experiences; and

3 **WHEREAS**, The study also found that a person with four or more
4 adverse childhood experiences was 12 times more likely to attempt
5 suicide, 10 times more likely to use drugs, seven times more likely
6 to be an alcoholic, and 46 times more likely to have learning or
7 emotional problems; and

8 **WHEREAS**, The emerging science and research on toxic stress and
9 adverse childhood experiences evidence a growing public health
10 crisis with implications for educational, juvenile justice, criminal
11 justice, and health care systems; and

12 **WHEREAS**, Early childhood offers a unique window of opportunity to
13 prevent and heal the impact of adverse childhood experiences and
14 toxic stress on a child's body and brain; and

15 **WHEREAS**, Positively influencing the architecture of a child's
16 developing brain and reducing children's exposure to adverse
17 childhood experiences is more effective and less costly than
18 attempting to correct poor learning, health, and behaviors later in
19 life; now, therefore,

20

21 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Senate of the State of New Jersey (the
22 General Assembly concurring):

23

24 1. The Legislature of the State of New Jersey respectfully urges
25 the Governor to develop strategies to reduce children's exposure to
26 adverse childhood experiences, address the impact of such
27 experiences on a child's brain and body, and invest in preventive
28 health care and other educational, social, and mental health
29 interventions that will positively affect the lives of New Jersey's
30 children and their families.

31

32 2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,
33 shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly or the
34 Secretary of the Senate to the Governor and Prevent Child Abuse
35 New Jersey.

36

37

38

STATEMENT

39

40 This concurrent resolution respectfully urges the Governor to
41 develop strategies to reduce children's exposure to adverse
42 childhood experiences, address the impact of such experiences on a
43 child's brain and body, and invest in preventive health care and
44 other educational, social, mental health interventions that will
45 positively affect the lives of New Jersey's children and their
46 families.